



THE ACADEMY

WITH WHICH ARE INCORPORATED LITERATURE AND THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Edited by LORD ALFRED BRUCE DOUGLAS

No. 1937

JUNE 19, 1909

PRICE THREEPENCE

"SCORPIO." By J. A. CHALONER

"... He prides himself on the fact that he is a hard and terrible bitter. Indeed, he assures us that he has come to the conclusion that you can put a wicked man 'to sleep' with a sonnet in pretty much the same way that a prize-fighter puts his opponent to sleep with a finished blow. And not only does Mr. Chaloner believe in what we may term the sonnetorial fist, but he believes also in whips and scorpions, for the cover of his book is decorated with an angry-looking seven-thonged scourge, and he dubs the whole effort 'Scorpio.' So that when we look to the fair page itself we know what to expect. Nor are we disappointed. Mr. Chaloner goes to the opera. Being a good poet, he immediately writes a sonnet about it, the which, however, he calls 'The Devil's Horseshoe.' We reproduce it for the benefit of all whom it may concern:—

A fecund sight for a philosopher—
Rich as Golconda's mine in lessons rare—
That gem-bedizen'd "horse-shoe" at th' Opera,
Replete with costly bags and matrons fair!
His votaresses doth Mammon there array,
His Amazonian Phalanx dread to face!

Figuratively speaking, we (Palmetto Press) might add that Mr. Chaloner steps forward as the champion of Shakespeare's memory, and lands, with the force of a John L. Sullivan, upon the point of the jaw of Mr. G. B. SHAW, owing to the latter's impertinent comments upon Shakespeare.

(Delivered, post-paid on receipt of two dollars, by registered mail, to PALMETTO PRESS, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, U.S.A.)

To Mammon there do they their homage pay;
Spangl'd with jewels, satins, silks and lace,
Croons whose old bosoms in their corsets creak;
Beldames whose slightest glance would fright a horse;
Ghouls—when they speak one hears the grave-mole squeak—
Their escorts *parvenus* of feature coarse.
A rich array of Luxury and Vice!
But, spite of them, the music's very nice.

"Here you have whips, scorpions, and a knock-out blow with a vengeance. The sonnet as a whole is not one which we can approve from a technical or a sentimental point of view, but it has points. Henley might have plumed himself on that line about the creaking corsets, and the last line, a *tour de force*, in its way reminds us of the withering ironies of Byron. It is only fair to Mr. Chaloner to add that not all his sonnets are concerned with back-biting. . . . Some of them show the tenderer emotions proper to a poet. We like him best, however, in his character as metrical bruiser. . . . His book is well worth possessing."—*The Academy*, August 8th, 1908.

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LIFE AND LETTERS

WE are glad to see our old friend the *Saturday Review* taking a proper line about the Imperial Press Conference. Last week it printed an admirable article on this subject, under the heading of "Bunkum in Excelsis." In striking contrast are the utterances of Mr. St. Loe Strachey's paper, the *Spectator*. We quote the beginning of an article from that dangerous and dismal journal. It is called "Lord Rosebery and the Press Conference."

Lord Rosebery may always be trusted to rise to a great Imperial occasion. He possesses to a degree not vouchsafed to other public men that inestimable art which enables a man not merely to think the right thing on the right occasion, but to say it, and to say it in words with which tact, good feeling, good humour, and good sense are equally blended. The Imperial Press Conference constitutes a great occasion, for here are gathered in the old home representatives of an institution of which the British race is peculiarly proud.

It is astonishing that sane people can be found in England literally in thousands to read this sort of canting fudge. The truth of the matter is, of course, that Lord Rosebery is an accomplished after-dinner speaker, and that out of politeness to the guests of the Imperial Press Conference he went through the necessary hoops with his usual agility and urbanity. One of these hoops was a highly held one and a difficult one to negotiate—the hoop of taking the proceedings seriously. Lord Rosebery went through it like a bird; but that does not alter the fact that the whole of the proceedings of this precious Conference amounted to an ignominious farce. As to the institution of which the "British race" is peculiarly proud (in other words the Harmsworth-cum-Pearson-cum-Newnes - cum - Cadbury - cum-Rowntree-cum-Strachey press), all we can say is that if the "British race" cannot find something more worth being proud about it had better go out and drown itself in a body. The present condition of the Press in England is quite horrible. Corruption, dishonesty, cant, humbug and religion for gain are what chiefly characterise it. The "British race," so far from being proud of it, is beginning to have serious qualms about it, and if Mr. Strachey fails to understand this so much the worse for him. Mr. Strachey may take it from us that the

"British race" is not proud either of him or the *Spectator*; and while the "British race" is on the whole, and not without reason, well disposed to Lord Rosebery, it would have thought a great deal more of him if he had given the assembled pressmen a little wholesome plain speaking and serious criticism.

Mr. Strachey is very strong on the "broad-minded tolerance" racket in religion; and Mr. Stead, if we remember rightly, made an effort some years ago to throw a very wide net in the religious way. In Mr. Stead's case the scheme took the form of sending an amiable Nonconformist minister to Rome, with a view of roping the Pope and the Cardinals and the Holy See generally into a concern beautifully and brightly denominated the "Union of the Churches." Needless to say, Rome received the proposals with inextinguishable laughter, and the whole project came to an untimely end. But a certain scion of a noble house, who in the intervals of exercising his feudal propensities is not above turning a nimble penny, has apparently come to the conclusion that in Mr. Stead's exploded scheme there may possibly yet be money; consequently, it appears that we are threatened with the appearance of a new paper, entitled, if we mistake not, the *Re-Union Magazine*. The bright young gentleman in question is connected with two publishing firms, which carry on two very different classes of business; for while one firm in which he is the principal shareholder is engaged in publishing religious works and translations of various Christian liturgies, the other has gone in chiefly for dubious stories of a highly spiced character and anything else that will bring grist to the mill without actually compelling the intervention of the police. It will be interesting to observe whether the beautiful Christian spirit which is expected to pervade the columns of the *Re-Union Magazine* will enter into this gentleman's business affairs to the extent of bringing about a union between Messrs. Dash and Co. and Messrs. Blank and Blank, the two firms in question. We withhold their names for the present, but we shall revert to this matter on a future occasion, and as it is one of obvious public importance and highly interesting from the point of view of letters, we shall leave nothing unsaid.

What Mr. Israel Zangwill would no doubt describe as a controversy between himself and Lord Curzon of Kedleston has been going on in the columns of the *Standard*. As a matter of fact, it has been much less of a controversy than a free advertisement for Mr. Zangwill which Lord Curzon and the Editor of the *Standard* were very unwise to give him. Gentlemen of the political eminence of Lord Curzon have no business to engage in controversies in the newspapers with third-rate novelists, especially on the question of Woman's Suffrage. Mr. Zangwill has made the important discovery that Lord Cromer, Lord Milner and Lord Curzon, who have all three of them occupied the positions of what the hapenny papers describe as "great pro-consuls," are all strenuously opposed to Woman's Suffrage. Naturally Mr. Zangwill is not surprised; no supporter of Woman's Suffrage ever is surprised at anything. "Ha, ha," says he, "we have here three eminent public characters all opposed to Woman's Suffrage, and on looking into the matter a little closely we find that they are all branded with the common stigma of having served their country in the most exalted positions in India, in South Africa, and in Egypt. What can one expect from such people?" If they had been minor novelists of the Jewish persuasion it would have been another matter. The general public, however, will not be disposed to accept Mr. Zangwill's view as to the relative weight of distinguished statesmen and undistinguished writers.

The misfortune of the Woman's Suffrage movement is that it has never been able to claim as a supporter even one single man who is intellectually distinguished in the broad sense. Their pride and their glory is Mr. Bernard Shaw, and we wish them joy of him. Any cause supported by Mr. Bernard Shaw and Mr. Israel Zangwill, to say nothing of Lord Russell and "Dr." Clifford, is foredoomed to ignominious failure; and even the roars of Mr. Frank Harris in his best rabbit-skin coat will avail the Suffragists nothing. They are played out.

Mr. Frank Harris, in *Vanity Fair*, expresses himself as follows:—"We are very sorry indeed that Mr. Justice Darling comes into our black list this week." Mr. Justice Darling, on the other hand, will probably be consumed with joy, especially as the offence which has induced Mr. Harris to include him in his "black list" is that of sentencing to a month's imprisonment a disreputable scoundrel of the name of Harry Boulter. The man Boulter was charged some months ago with using indecent and blasphemous language in a public place, and thereby causing pain and disgust to thousands of people. He was charged before Mr. Justice Phillimore, who, on his giving a solemn undertaking not to repeat his offence, allowed him to go free on his own recognisances. Boulter deliberately broke his promise and violated his undertaking, and he was accordingly re-arrested and brought before Mr. Justice Darling, who very properly sentenced him to one month's imprisonment. Mr. Harris asks with a great show of indignation "Who is responsible for these disgraceful prosecutions?" As Mr. Harris is anxious to know who is responsible for these prosecutions we have pleasure in informing him that the police are responsible for them, and if Mr. Harris is anxious to add a month or two in gaol to his variegated experiences he has only to go out and imitate the example of his dear friend Mr. Boulter. Mr. Harris goes on to describe Boulter's opinions as "opinions which are almost universally held by educated people to-day." It was Mr. Harris who the other day informed the polite world that Mr. Lloyd George's Budget had been received on every side with acclamation; so that Mr. Harris evidently mistakes the opinion of his own limited circle for the opinion of the country at large. This is a serious blunder from the point of view of mere journalism. If Mr. Harris is impelled, whether by choice or by necessity, to frequent the society of ladies and gentlemen who approve of blasphemy and delight in the Budget proposals of Mr. Lloyd George that is his own affair; but he really must not assume that such people represent the feeling of the community at large, whether they choose to call themselves "educated" or not.

The Church Pageant, which took place last week, was more or less ruined by a continual downpour of rain; in fact, the elements of heaven, not to say the stars in their courses, fought against it for all they were worth. Our first feelings when we heard of this catastrophe were those of sorrow and commiseration, but subsequently we happened to pick up an illustrated paper containing a portrait of Mr. Chesterton dressed up as Dr. Johnson, and it appears that Mr. Chesterton, so caparisoned, took a prominent part in the Church Pageant. No wonder the elements of heaven and the stars in their courses were outraged and expressed their disapproval in the comparatively mild form of floods of rain. Under the circumstances we should not have been surprised to hear that an earthquake had swallowed up the whole Pageant. Needless to say, Mr. Chesterton no more resembles Dr. Johnson than Mr. Pawling resembles Dr. W. G. Grace.

There is no accounting for the vagaries of the public taste. Not many months ago Mr. Lewis Waller produced an admirable drama called "The Chief of Staff." Of its kind it was one of the best plays we have seen for a long time, and, while it was frankly melodramatic, it had, in addition to several thrilling situations, a distinct literary touch about the dialogue. For some extraordinary reason the play was almost universally damned by the critics, and was taken off after a run extending to only a few days. At the present time Mr. Waller is producing what is quite evidently destined to be a great popular success, "Fires of Fate," by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. For our part, we make no complaint; for we are always pleased to see so conscientious and sterling an actor as Mr. Waller meeting with due rewards. On the other hand, candour compels us to say that we have seldom witnessed a more clumsily constructed play than "Fires of Fate" or listened to a duller or more wooden dialogue. The idea of the play is quite a good one—that of a man, apparently in full health and strength, suddenly informed by his doctor that certain symptoms, which he had taken to be merely passing manifestations of some ephemeral complaint, are in reality indications of an absolutely deadly and practically incurable disease, leaving their victim not more than a year or eighteen months at the outside to live. To do Sir Arthur Conan Doyle justice, we must say that in the first act he rose well to the situation, and we had begun to think that we were going to witness a good piece of work; but the remaining acts completely went to pieces. Some idea of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's conception of the way to import reality into a piece of dramatic work may be gathered from the fact that of the chief persons in his play (a very tiresome middle-class company of Cook's tourists on a Nile boat) one is a Scotsman, with dialect; another is an Irishman, similarly afflicted; another is a Frenchman, who talks the usual Frenchman's stage English; and two others—the heroine of the piece and her aunt—are Americans! However, all this did not prevent Mr. Waller from giving a fine performance in the part of Colonel Egerton, and the whole company made the best of their opportunities. We shall not particularise, except to note an accomplished piece of acting by Mr. Evelyn Beerbohm in the part of a rich young Cockney bounder, whose "better feelings" come out under the stress of misfortune, and to express our regret that Miss Auriol Lee, an exceedingly beautiful woman, had somehow or other managed to make herself look almost plain by putting on two of the ugliest dresses we have ever had the misfortune to gaze upon. We cannot help thinking that these dresses must have been chosen by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle himself, possibly with the assistance of Mr. Pawling, of the "house of Heinemann."

On the day of publication last Thursday week a "review" of Lord Alfred Douglas's "Sonnets" appeared in the *Times*. It consisted of exactly nine words, and it seemed to us to be such a complete example of what a review ought not to be that we wrote up a full-page advertisement round it, and printed it for two weeks running on the outside back cover of THE ACADEMY. The *Times*, of course, would have been perfectly justified in ignoring the book of "Sonnets" sent to it for review; but we maintain that any paper which reviews a book at all is bound to do so seriously and honestly. We were not in the least chagrined by the foolish and undignified ineptitude of the method adopted by the *Times* for "getting back a little bit of its own" in revenge for the scathing criticism of its conduct which we have felt it our duty to put before our readers on several occasions during

the last two years. Anyone who has read *THE ACADEMY* at all carefully must be aware that our opinion of the *Times* under its present management is not an exalted one, and we should have imagined that it would have been impossible in the whole of London to find anyone so utterly lost to all sense of humour or appreciation of irony as to misunderstand the purport of the full-page advertisement of the "Sonnets" which appeared in the last two numbers of *THE ACADEMY*. But we have reckoned without Mr. Bottomley, or, as in view of all the circumstances, we shall take the liberty of naming him in future, Mr. Bolmondely. It appears that Mr. Bolmondely took the advertisement quite seriously and really imagined that the author and the publishers of the "Sonnets" were beside themselves with joy at receiving a one-line notice in the *Times*; and he has been regaling his readers with what he no doubt considers cutting paragraphs based on this childish assumption. Poor Mr. Bolmondely, in his desperate attempts to score a point against *THE ACADEMY*, has come a series of the most undignified croppers that have ever visited a professional company promoter, who is endeavouring to pose as a journalist; while, as for Vivian, the rejected of Constantinople, ever since we had occasion to reprove him for his dastardly attack on the honour and reputation of Lord Roberts, his features have become a map of woe, and his cheerful laughter is no longer heard in his favourite resort, the ground floor of the Café Royal, where, like the village blacksmith, he sits among "the boys."

In Saturday's *Westminster Gazette* there appeared what purported to be a review of Lord Alfred Douglas's "Sonnets." On Tuesday the following letter was addressed to the *Westminster Gazette*:

HIGH POETRY.

The Editor, THE WESTMINSTER GAZETTE.

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a review of Lord Alfred Douglas's "Sonnets" which was printed in the *Westminster Gazette* on Saturday last. Your reviewer begins his notice with a quotation from a note of my own, which quotation I shall ask your permission to repeat:

Leaving out Shakespeare, who is a sonneteer to himself, Milton gave us a few good sonnets; Keats has given us a similar few; and the same holds true of Wordsworth, of Matthew Arnold, of Rossetti, and of Swinburne. To this general few—probably not a hundred all told—a good number of the sonnets in the present book must be added. Several of them will stand on their pure merits so long as the English language is understood.

These are my words. In the course of his lengthy remarks your reviewer pretends to controvert what I have said; but he is careful never flatly to say that he does not agree with me, preferring rather to do his work by innuendo. If I am unjust to him perhaps he will be so good as to assert in your columns that the opinion which both of us have now quoted cannot be justified out of the "Sonnets." At a moment when the question of the proper recognition of poetry by reviewers is being so widely discussed it seems to me highly desirable that spurious critical coin, whether it be mine or your reviewer's, should be nailed to the counter.

Yours truly,

T. W. H. CROSLAND.

June 15th, 1909.

As the editor of the *Westminster Gazette* has not printed this letter, we are forced to the conclusion that he has been unable to communicate with his contributor. It would have been courteous of Mr. Spender to advise us that this was the case. However, we will give him till next Tuesday to print Mr. Crosland's letter, or, in default, to offer some explanation to his readers. The matter is far too serious from the point of view of criticism to be allowed idly to pass.

SONNET.

CALL the musicians hither; bid them play;
For evening comes all ruthfully and needs
Deft clavicern, the fiddle-men, and they
That finger up and down their diverse reeds,
Pipes, flutes, and horns: and where is one who leads
These gentles on their quaint, harmonious way?
Silence: and then the gracious viol pleads
From speaking strings; and the rest have their say.

Set forth, ye marching melodies austere;
Lest we remember wanton Youth gone winging,
Charm us away to Arcady's green glades,—
Where down the beechen solitudes we hear
Calm voices lifted in some golden singing
That we would have with us when music fades.

S. S.

CERBERUS IN THE HOUSE

THE House of Commons, under the baneful influence of the present Government, is rapidly becoming the abiding place of every kind of unseemliness. On Tuesday last one of the Labour Members, a Mr. W. Thorne, surpassed all previous records. "Mr. W. Thorne (Labour, South West Ham) asked the Foreign Secretary if he was aware that the Emperor of Russia intends to visit English territorial waters at about the latter end of July, and if the visit will in any way be officially recognised by the Government?" Having received a suitable reply, Mr. Thorne proceeded further to say: "Is the right hon. gentleman aware of the intense and growing feeling of the country against the visit of the Emperor of Russia? It would be a very good job if the Russian people—" at this point Mr. Thorne was interrupted by the Speaker; but a few moments later he again interjected the words: "I hope he (the Russian Emperor) will get his deserts when he comes here. The British don't want him." Major Anstruther-Gray called the attention of the Speaker to this observation, and the Speaker somewhat tamely said: "It is a rather discourteous expression to make towards the monarch of a friendly foreign power." Whereupon Mr. Thorne said "He is an inhuman brute," and there, amidst loud cries of "Order!" the incident came to an end. We consider that it should not have been allowed to end in this way. That any ill-bred working man who happens to get himself elected to the House of Commons should be allowed with impunity to make insolent remarks about the sovereigns of friendly powers is a disgrace and a scandal. The man Thorne should have been called upon to withdraw his disgraceful language; and if he refused to do this he should have been suspended and turned out of the House. It is bad enough that for our sins and follies we should have to endure the presence among our legislators of persons who would more properly be engaged in selling vegetables from a coster's cart or attending to the plumbing, but at least we might expect that they should keep civil tongues in their heads. We do not for a moment wish to say anything against costermongers or plumbers. On the contrary, we like them and respect them in

their proper places; but these places do not include the House of Commons. We have no knowledge of the particular form of "labour" which was honoured by the distinguished attention of Mr. Thorne before he took to politics as a profession; nor do we wish to suggest that Mr. Thorne was ever either a costermonger or a plumber. We have far too much respect for costermongers and plumbers to suggest anything of the kind; but we shall take the opportunity of saying quite plainly that Mr. Thorne has demonstrated once for all his utter unfitness to represent any class of working men. Working men in the lump are neither foul-mouthed, abusive, nor impudent; and they have, as a rule, a proper respect for things and persons which ought to be respected. Consequently, when they are represented in Parliament by men who think it a fine thing to indulge in ignorant and vulgar abuse of their betters they are, in fact, being misrepresented in the most serious way possible. We shall not waste the time of our readers by arguing out the question of the personal character of His Imperial Majesty the Russian Emperor. Those who have any knowledge of him are aware that His Majesty is the kindest, the most generous and the most humane of men. His position—that of a man in daily and hourly danger of violent death at the hands of bloody-minded and unscrupulous ruffians—is one which must command the sympathy and the respect of every decent man and woman in the world; and that he should be subjected to unprovoked insults at the hands of persons like Mr. Thorne is nothing less than outrageous. Of course, Mr. Thorne in his present attitude has in his mind's eye the shining example of the great Mr. John Burns. Owing to the unfortunate and deplorable action of the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in making a Cabinet Minister of Mr. Burns, the horny-handed sons of toil who have achieved three hundred a year and a seat in the House of Commons have got the idea firmly implanted in their breasts that the royal road to honour and advancement is virulent language and violent defiance of authority. Unfortunately, what is done cannot be undone. The sop has been given to Cerberus, and Cerberus, after the manner of his kind, has devoured it and is asking for more. In point of fact, what Cerberus ought to get is not sops, but a big thick stick, not applied unnecessarily or cruelly, but always kept in reserve in case he deserves it.

PUBLISHERS' ADVERTISEMENTS

FROM AN AUTHOR'S POINT OF VIEW.

A FEATURE common to practically every publisher's agreement is one stipulating that "all details connected with advertising the said book shall be left to the publisher's discretion." After the book has appeared and the advertising of it is completed, the author will probably think very little of the publisher's "discretion." It is quite likely, indeed, that he will be disinclined to credit him with any, and in doing so he will not, generally speaking, be far wrong.

Authors and publishers disagree on many points, but it is over this matter of advertising that they are more often and to a greater extent at loggerheads than over any other one connected with the production of books. The publisher complains that the author makes impossible demands upon him, and the author, for his part, feels convinced that the publisher is committing literary infanticide and that his offspring is deliberately strangled at birth. Hence the *entente* that should exist between the two often becomes a little strained.

When a writer finds that his masterpiece has fallen flat he naturally blames the publisher. As often as not, he is quite justified in doing so, for when the

average publisher brings out a book he seems to take quite extraordinary pains to prevent the fact becoming known. This may be very dignified, but it is not the way to sell books. Certainly no other tradesman would be fatuous enough to think that whatever he deals in will automatically find a market without any effort on his part. The truth is books are the most difficult of all classes of goods to sell, and therefore require both energy and enterprise to put them into circulation. But this appears to be persistently withheld.

The average sum spent on advertising an ordinary book is probably about £20. This is little enough, in all conscience; still, provided the money be intelligently applied, it is enough to secure the book a fair amount of publicity. In nine cases out of ten, however, the money is not intelligently applied. It is simply wasted. First of all, the advertisements in themselves are wrong, and, secondly, they appear in the wrong channels. Unless an advertisement whets the appetite, as it were, and induces the reader to buy the article to which it refers, its appointed mission is not served. Now, to make any sort of appeal to the reader is about the last result achieved by the average book advertisement. What it does is merely to frighten him away. This is because it is so unattractively worded that it looks as though it had been composed by the office-boy. At any rate, it only stands the very faintest chance of making the reader think that the book to which it refers is in the least worth buying. It is simply one among a dozen others figuring in the same list, and this list merely contains a bald announcement that the book has been issued. Indeed, beyond the title, the name of the author, and the price, no other details are mentioned. As likely as not, too, the list appears in an organ which, from its nature, makes no appeal to book-buyers. For example, to fill a column of the *Stable Boy's Whisper* with an advertisement of somebody's sermons may denote enterprise, but it is not likely to sell a copy. The average publisher, however, who seems constitutionally unable to see an inch beyond his nose, regards the matter from only one point of view when drawing up his precious "list." This is the question of cost. He cannot, or will not, realise that a suitable medium is always the cheapest in the end. Accordingly, he throws away money on obscure and foolish papers which, if they circulate at all, circulate only among people who would much rather have beer than books and who confine their reading matter to betting news and reports of suffragette meetings. The wonder is, accordingly, not that the average book has so poor a sale, but that it has a sale of any description.

Under the circumstances, accordingly, it is not surprising to find that there is a growing custom on the part of authors to eke out the publisher's advertisements with others of their own. Even those novelists who have attained the pinnacle of being "in demand" are by no means coy when it comes to banging the drum, and will bellow the praises of their works as lustily as any auctioneer engaged in selling brass watches to credulous yokels. In this they often display considerable ingenuity and fertility of resource. A favourite plan is to get up a newspaper controversy about the book which they wish to boom. If it is one that has been unfavourably reviewed, all the better, for then they can tell the critics what they think of them—which makes for entertaining reading and brightens the arid wastes of London's "literary" dailies.

Indeed, when it comes to exploiting herself the average lady novelist can give points and a beating to all her masculine confrères put together. One of their number, for example, has just organised what she is pleased to call a "literary competition" in con-

nection with her latest masterpiece. This takes the form of offering prizes for readers who write the "best" criticism upon it. Another much favoured device is to insert references to a book in the "Agony" or "Personal" columns of the morning papers. The sort of thing met with is more or less as follows:—

GEORGE: You positively must read "Pink Pastorals" by —. There is a reference to you on p. 165. Is it true?—MARY.

Or:—

ELIZABETH: Please send me "A Purple Passion" by — as a Christmas present. Everybody is simply raving about it here.—HENRY.

It seems very childish, but presumably it pays.

Fortunately, all London publishers are not alike in their methods, and the more enterprising among them have come to see that the old ways are not necessarily the best ways. Such as these, accordingly, announce their wares boldly, and when they issue a book take care that its existence shall be widely known. At present, however, very few of them seem to regard the hoardings as a suitable means of bringing books and buyers into contact with one another. Still, this medium is gradually beginning to be recognised by certain firms that have emerged from the hide-bound traditions of the older houses. A case in point is that of Messrs. —, who have just issued a striking poster of one of the novels on their list. It is not a work of art, perhaps—such as was Aubrey Beardsley's design for "The Yellow Book"—but it at any rate catches the eye and arrests attention.

Where books are concerned, discretion, it may safely be contended, is the better part of advertisement. From a selling point of view, quite as much harm is done by claiming all sorts of marvellous qualities for tenth-rate writers as by leaving the world in ignorance of their existence. A combination of brag and bounce may answer once, but not a second time. Yet, according to some of the firms who adopt these tactics, every author of whom they can get hold is a Kipling and Corelli rolled into one. For fear there should be any doubt about it, they draw up a preliminary "par," which is sent round to the purveyors of "literary gossip" in the evening papers, "for favour of insertion," and which (if accompanied by an advertisement) is duly given hospitality. With a view, however, to making assurance doubly sure, the publisher will add a descriptive note of his own. Here is the modest strain in which one such authority refers to a forthcoming novel:—

In this great human story, which has its setting in a small Western fishing village, Mr. — presents an unconventional view of the position of the married woman. The simple dignity of the style, and the strange spell of the narrative, with its wild dramatic climax, should place — among the masterpieces of English fiction. Order your copy at once, otherwise you may be kept waiting for weeks on the waiting list.

After this, there can be very little left for the critics to say when the "great human story" at length makes its appearance.

A second scheme (and one often adopted when the story is being serialised) takes the form of printing in the advertisement columns a short extract from some particularly striking passage. The idea is to whet the appetite and induce the chance reader to secure the entire mental feast. Such literary *hors d'œuvres* are always made as sensational as possible, and they invariably break off short in the middle of a thrilling episode. This is the sort of thing with which one meets:—

The dark eyes of the beautiful Countess flashed menacingly. "Unhand me, sir!" she hissed.

For answer, the other seized her by her shapely waist, and then, uttering a fierce cry, hurled her over the frowning crag to the jagged rocks below. As she fell through the air the Countess clutched desperately at the branch of a tree. For a moment it trembled beneath her weight, and then—

For the continuation of this remarkable and soul-stirring story see the current number of —.

Who could decline the opportunity?

The sort of commendation that both publishers and authors value most is one that comes from a clergyman. To obtain this they will angle patiently for weeks at a time. Sooner or later success is practically bound to crown their efforts, since few of even the higher Church dignitaries seem able to resist the temptation of being "drawn." The book is sent to them by the aspiring author, together with a covering letter asking for an expression of opinion regarding it. As soon as this arrives an elegant extract is made from it and printed broadcast. Sometimes, the volume is even lucky enough to obtain a "pulpit puff"—that is, to be made the theme of a sermon. A notable case in point was that of a certain mixture of patchouli and religion masquerading as a novel which recently attracted a favourable mention from the pulpit of Westminster Abbey and achieved a sale of over 300,000 copies. Since then, as may be imagined, the good-natured—but somewhat indiscreet—clerical critic has had books delivered at his door at the rate of a cartload or so per week. However, he has very wisely refused to swallow the bait a second time.

But, after all, the great thing to remember is that publishers' advertisements are only the means to an end, and not the end itself. This is a point of which authors as a class are rather apt to lose sight.

ITALIAN BACKGROUNDS

I.—THE MOUNTAIN FOREST.

"COME with me from Lebanon, with me from Lebanon, and look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards."

Leave the city in the dust below, the trim gardens and alleys of the town, leave the flat-faced plastered hovels on the hillside of the tillers of the Saturnian soil, the tortured vines, shining with new leaves, the olives silvering like puffs of smoke upon the grain-set slopes, the copsewood of oaks reddening with young leaf over beds of irises, rising among the cool, grey bloom of their leaves. Do not fear there is but little grass, blent with bitter herbs on the summits. Here is the fine-breathed mountain, the immeasurable air, the milk of dangling torrents, the unextinguished hearths of east and west, the cloths of morn and even: for olives you shall have the oil of gladness, instead of wine, the vintage of the Vine of Heaven and milk of torrents from the mountain breasts.

The pebbly way winds among a low growth of oaks just breaking into knots of fine amber leaf, the fresh shoots, varnished as if with rain, are sharp against the blue dome-like sky, without a taint of cloud. The bunches of leaves dance upon the short grey stems of the oaks mottled with white lichen; and mats of budding purple irises straggle by the precipitous way, while purple orchises and blue squills are half hidden by the dewy grass flushed with the first green of Spring. Here, too, are chestnuts, their leaf-fans bursting from their gummy buds, lifting their clear stems and snake-like tangle of roots above the earth which is patched with olive moss, and half covered with drifted oak leaves, shining pebbles and low-growing broom. On past the tangle of trees is

the bare promontory of the hill-crest, where a peasant with a basket of stones is throwing them at the lean sheep who are straying among the ledges of the vines below. And all around the dry, singing air, moving about the circle of mountain-crests—a wave-tossed sea of vales and mountain summits, spreading pyramids, blue as the many-faceted sea, flecked on the tops, too, with a foam of snow, frozen in calm as they were rocking towards a fall. Blue as moulded mist, various as the sea, unchanging in splendour save when a rolling indigo cloud-shadow spreads like a blot upon the fields at their feet, where all the towered cities, villages, vineyards and grey olive yards on the lower slopes are merged in blue, aerial, translucent, exquisitely pure. In this ethereal fabric of azure, the most real of realities, the most solid of substances, seem films upon some crystal sphere, infinitely withdrawn and visionary.

The air is windless, and the light streams softly through the haze on the horizon and the soft-edged clouds, not sharply enough to chequer the floor of the wood with a mat of moving shadows. The air is full of the sound of rushing water, the turbulence, the resonance, the smoke of the shivering waterbrooks, the hurry and incoherence of the headlong threads of falls passing like the current of their cooling water-breeze through the long-drawn aerial pines, close set, their trunks tufted with dark moss and mottled with white lichen. Below, in the sloped clearing near the old monastery, the primroses are dropped like stars on the turf, and the sapling beeches unfold in the air their pale down-fringed leaves. It is the *divina foresta spessa e viva* where Matilda plucks flowers in the meadow on the banks of the river Eunoe.

The long, stony path ascends gradually into the light almost encircling the abrupt mountain, leaving behind it the little hut-like shrines on the pine-shadowed, paved path, the pine-dark gullies, with their volleying streams spraying the mossy stones of their precipitous bed. Beyond the shadow of the pines the track winds through sunny beechen slopes "with shadows numberless," where the red, imperishable autumn leaves fly up in the cool gusts that move about the unfooted slopes of the hills, or rustle when a brown lizard darts from stone to stone over the dry bleached hill grass. The way is fringed with broom, and the light streams upward through the first red-amber knots of the sycamore, through the translucent screen of delicate beech-sprays, fine as thinnest vapour, that clothe from crown to root the grey trunks marbled with white lichen and dark moss. Every now and then from the buff mat of last year's leaves a whirling drift leaps upward with the spirit of unextinguishable mirth over the close sward, which is bright with the silver of tremulous wind flowers, of clear purple crocuses opening their petals to show their inner spark of gold, and blue squills burning like the transparent flame of a fire of drift wood. This mat of myriads, colouring the giant slopes, choking the thread-like brooks under their arching shades, must have remained in the memory of Milton as the strongest image of profusion in his tremendous simile of the fallen angels, who lay

Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa.

And soon the pathways, where the green beeches meet overhead, open before a distant circle of hills, which show like cold and moulded clouds remote, withdrawn in their milky vales, only less fantastic than the clots of cloud thrown up from them like foam sundered from the grey-blue sea. In this finer air, the months have been set back; it is early April, and

the beeches are not yet in leaf, their pointed russet buds shine like sparks against the blue of the super-incumbent heaven; the turf is dun and sapless, untouched by the dews and breath of Spring; the wind-ruffled crocus grows more sparsely, and here and there glows the five-pointed blue gentian, that arctic flower of the heights; while under the singing wind the beeches dwindle to dwarf shrubs scattered among the drifts of snow that silver the northward slopes, its crystal shining in faint prismatic radiance under the intolerable glory of the sun of heaven, that golden hill-flower that withers daily, and daily is renewed.

The mountain clefts are bright with milky threads of torrents spun from the abrupt heights, spirting down the gullies they blacken with their shivering spray and making the pale leaves of the sapling beech that overhangs it tremble like a flame in a current of air; volleying under the arch that supports the roadway, a thin thread of grey resonant water, then widening into grey and brown shallows, trembling as they ebb down the hill into pale reflections of the far-off blue and white sky. Among a congeries of grey misshapen boulders, green with saturated, sweet-smelling moss, it flies, shadowed by the mast-like trunks of the pines that stream upward and sunward from the clefts of the hill; and the air about it is filled with the tiny drops, with the savour of moss and weed, of the soft rubble of pinings, of odorous chips from some felled and stripped pine that lies, mighty and mightily fallen for the snow-white oxen to drag away down the slopes. And through the blue and motty interstices of the pines, among the reticulated shadows of their branches that dapple the trough of this headlong torrent, its voice seems to whisper in somewhat inarticulate speech, in the old language of the country, *siste viator*.

On the floor of the half-lit sanctuary of the tall pines the red beech-leaves lie in crisp drifts, with here and there a silver residuum of unmelted snow; through one far aisle the distance glimmers greyly, as through a darkened window, and nearer, between the framing stems of a pair of trees with "sapless green and heavy foliage dun," a space of plain and valley is included, chequered with shadows of wood and faint divided fields and villages. Here a film of white cloud rises slowly, like an Assumption, with accompanying angels fixed in a solemn *tripudio celeste*, and whitening into a closer curd in the colder air of the heights, against the blue bloom of the distant pine-wood, and against the long summit of the many-breasted ridge, greening over with budding beeches, where it finally melts into the cloudy sky. Above on these higher slopes are conical turf huts of charcoal-burners, and near by a blackened platform of their labours—the only signs of human life in these solitudes peopled by the silvery web-rooted beeches, whose russet leaves whistle in the wind beside the crowded buds of Spring, and whose fallen myriads bury the light of laughing purple crocuses; higher, again, the dwarfed beeches are left behind for the bare wind-tormented summits, speckled silver bleached thistles and dried heather, with slabs of grey boulders, overscrawled with blots and arabesques of palest lemon and green lichen, and multitudinous weather-stains. The grass, too, is bleached and dry, matted like the locks of wool upon a mountain sheep. By a cairn of scattered stones is a short rude pillar, raised as it were to the *genus loci*, while above this desolation the air streams, pure and yielding, as over the unfooted sea.

The pale summits send their promontories over the cloven valley like blunt rocks jutting over a wine-faced sea. It is as if one were an insect folded in the flower of the purple iris that opens so freely in the

valleys below; the sky and the far-distant horizon—fused into one here and there by a brooding mist—like the pale erect petals of that flower, while the valley and the rear heights are purple as its drooping leaves. Below, in the valley, the cities show like dim indeterminate stains, and lessening villas and farms shine dimly like sprinkled salt; the web of road-ways and rivers but wire-like lines and scars upon the melting surface of the vision.

REVIEWS

A BOSTON FAMILY

The Chippendales. By ROBERT GRANT. Stanley Paul & Co., 6s.)

ON the few occasions when the reviewer confronts a novel which consists of six hundred closely-printed pages, his feelings are apt to be somewhat dismal, but we are sincerely pleased to be able to congratulate the author of this lengthy book on the success with which he has accomplished his almost epic task. It requires considerable courage to introduce so large a number of characters, and great ability to keep them all in view—and in correct perspective—without hopelessly tangling their motives and bothering the reader. Mr. Grant has exercised a very pretty art of selection and management and amid all the competitive interests the thread is never in danger of being lost. From the outset, however, we realise that this is no ordinary glib story to be "skipped" or hurried through. In remarking this we do not intend to convey that it is difficult or an undue strain on the attention. It is not involved either in language or plot, nor does it betray in the least degree that spinning-out process so affected by writers who lack ideas; it comes, in fact, to a perfectly natural conclusion when the fortunes of the principal actors are fairly settled. It is not possible to give any accurate sketch of the story in this notice; we must confine ourselves to a brief indication of its strong points, which lie in the direction of studies of character. The scene is set entirely in Boston, U.S.A., and Henry Chippendale Sumner, the uncompromising young lawyer, is one of the finest types of the "straight," mildly defiant, ascetic Puritans of the older American school that we remember to have met. The story of his confident and clumsy wooing of Priscilla Avery is told with consummate skill, and it is quite with a sigh of relief that we find Priscilla's years of indecision and her strained idealism lapse at last into her surrender to her lover's arms; a little longer, and they would both have been perilously near the age when love's fervours have fled. Her sarcastic tongue never daunted him, and as for a long time she saw only his bad points she is sometimes rather hard on him. She is continually critical:

As she looked at Henry, he reminded her of a hungry—yes, a faithful and well-meaning—dog, on his hind legs, watching for scraps which she dangled before his nose, and just when he thought one of them was his, jerked away. She felt almost like stroking him. But if she were to do so, would he not be certain to bite her in his clumsy efforts to lick her hand?

From which we observe that there was a cruel side to the good Priscilla's heart, although the confusion of her mind did not deceive Henry, who was a fine fellow, if a trifle narrow. The real hero, we suppose, is one Hugh Blaisdell, whose rise from clerk to millionaire is so penetratingly and pitilessly traced, but we are inclined to place the curious, complicated idyll of Sumner and his lady above this in human interest and genuine fascination. It would take a good deal of space merely to allude to the many other people whose careers are mingled with these—the Chippendales as a family, for instance, are numerous. The picture of

Harrison Chippendale, the man who has fallen behind, who sees his sons and his friends keen and hot in the modern life, hustling in the front rank, who is so pathetically conscious of the old days when Boston was smaller and the tide flowed more smoothly, and who is such a thorough, patriotic gentleman, is one full of charm and delicate feeling. His interview with the impertinent reporter who calls scenting a family scandal, and his scathing resentment of "smart" newspaper methods, is a telling piece of work:

"And have you seen fit," he asked, "to invade my privacy in order to show me this disgusting screed?"

While Mr. Chippendale's eyes were on the newspaper his visitor reproduced the card which he promptly presented in response to these fiery but august words. As Mr. Chippendale ignored the outstretched hand, he laid it on a little table which held an electric lamp and stepped back. "These are my credentials. My name is Bliffel: on the staff of the *Mercury*."

"Are you responsible for this outrage?"

"It came to us from an authentic source," replied Mr. Bliffel. "We're the only evening paper which has it; so naturally we want to make hay while the sun shines. . . . We're no worse than the others. The newspaper must live. Its business is to circulate news, not to suppress it. The story is true, isn't it?"

"My brother left a widow, who was once his stenographer, if that's what you mean."

"Formerly in the employ of your nephew, Mr. Sumner, the late candidate for Mayor on the citizen's ticket. And there's a posthumous child—you admitted that." Standing on the hearth-rug with his hands in his side pockets and his legs apart, the visitor was obviously making a magnanimous endeavour to point out to his auditor that he had nothing to complain of. Did not this first citizen stand in need of enlightenment on the score of what every free-born citizen of a democracy was expected to put up with? "That's all we've said," he continued, "though, of course, we had to put it picturesquely. An octogenarian blue-blood marries his typewriter and her posthumous son becomes the heir to millions. Rather striking for conservative Boston. King Cophetua and the beggar maid are back numbers to the general public, but it will want to read about this."

Mr. Chippendale gives the reporter a bit of straight talking, and the man is about to depart with a ruffled spirit—"Wait and see how the yellow journals treat you," he says, "before you get your back up"—when Chauncey Chippendale, a son, happens to call; he, knowing the unfortunate importance of remaining on friendly terms with the *Mercury*, calms the censured news-gatherer by his tact, while the old man looks on amazed. We should have liked to quote the whole scene, having done it scanty justice by so brief an extract, but it extends to several pages, and our available space is at an end. It must suffice to say for the present that this is one of the really fine books that go to hearten us amid the welter of crass futility which now disgraces the name of literature; that the perusal of it has been a great pleasure, and that our readers who are judges of what is worthy in modern fiction will, we believe, find themselves thoroughly in accord with this opinion.

GOYA TO VELASQUEZ

The School of Madrid. By A. DE BERNETE Y MORET, translated by MRS. STUART ERSKINE. (Duckworth & Co., 7s. 6d.)

"THE School of Madrid" is an account of an interesting and brilliant artistic circle, the school of Spanish painting between Goya and Velasquez, omitting, as superfluous, anything more than a most brief introductory account of the latter, and treating with fuller detail those pupils and followers, and certain contemporaries of the master, whose works had been confused with his, and "whose *œuvre* had been merged by history in that of the more dominating personality." Throughout the book, the originality of Señor de Bernete y

Moret's views, his scholarly and profound study of the art of the seventeenth century, his knowledge of technique, is everywhere remarkable.

"Almost all celebrated painters," he writes, "have gathered around them pupils or imitators who have produced work which very much resembles their own. Of these imitators, there were generally some who had sufficient talent to reproduce the external appearance of the style imitated and to produce pictures which, painted at the same time, in the same country, from the same or very similar models, and with like colours and canvas, have been, after the lapse of centuries, confused with the original work of the master. Only deep and prolonged study and a constant comparison of one with another permit the critic to differentiate between the typical, original and unique works of the artist and those of his imitators." Hence the fascinating game of attributions.

The personality and work of the giant Velasquez have been studied by so many critics, especially in recent years, that the author has decided to abandon this study, as he "could do no more than repeat what others have said already." He is content with placing in its position and in its time the figure of the great *naturaliste*. But a clearer definition is given to this figure by the illumination of his background, the study of the *terra incognita* which has hitherto surrounded him, his obscure contemporaries, and his artistic offspring, the school of Madrid. A critical analysis of the doubtful pictures ascribed to Velasquez, which closely resemble his work in externals, but have not the stamp of undoubted originals, leads the author—as it had led his father, the well-known critic, de Bernete, in his work on Velasquez—to the conclusion that they are the work of Juan Bautista Martinez del Mazo, pupil and son-in-law of the master, whose works are here for the first time studied in detail. The three chapters devoted to del Mazo, with his prodigious talent for imitation, who gained by assimilation not indeed the fundamental qualities of his master, but what was purely external in his works, are of great interest, though the author states his results somewhat briefly, and in a form which only partially suggests the synthesis of complex impressions derived from a close study of these works. His starting-point in the study of del Mazo is the analysis of the "Family of the Artist," in the Imperial Gallery of Vienna, which, as de Bernete has written in his "Velasquez," "supplied the means of clearing up all the doubts which troubled me relative to several pictures attributed to Velasquez. At first sight several parts of the composition seem to have been painted by him, but compare the elements of this picture with those of authentic works and you will find in the arrangements of the groups, and in the drawing of each of the figures, so much that is commonplace and insignificant that it is difficult to understand why there could have been much doubt as to the authorship of the canvas." The work, though of the school of Velasquez, has nothing of the elegance and grace of the greater painter, and is remarkable for its peculiarly *gauche* and uninspired grouping. It is a work of talent, as compared with the work of genius.

Signor de Bernete y Moret follows his father in claiming for del Mazo three well-known paintings once universally attributed to Velasquez—the portrait of Admiral Adrian Pulido Pareja (rejected on account of its heavy and ill-drawn feet, the inartistic curve of the left arm, and the uncertainty of the execution in some parts from the works of Velasquez); the Lady with a Mantilla at Devonshire House, and Prince Balthazar Carlos in the Riding School at Grosvenor House, the latter, with its very frank and bold touch, a very clever imitation of the master. The fine portrait of Philip IV. in the Dulwich Gallery, and that of Prince Balthazar Carlos at the age of sixteen, in the Prado Museum, are also given by father and son to del Mazo.

From a study of these works, and from del Mazo's interesting landscapes, the figure of del Mazo, who has been forgotten for so many years and whose name has been overshadowed by that of his master, gradually emerges. As in art, so in life, del Mazo is always by the side of his father-in-law, "he seems to have had no wish to detach himself from his master, or to distinguish himself either as an official or as an artist." He is absolutely in bondage to the greater painter, from "the ensemble of the figure to the most insignificant detail." His work is lacking in design, poor also in the setting and disposition of groups and figures, and of a more opaque colour than that of Velasquez; but with his wonderful talent for the imitation of his master's style, the earlier attribution of many of his works to Velasquez is not incomprehensible, especially in the case of his portraits of single figures. This peculiar talent, the author adds, "is not rare among Spanish artists, although it seldom rises to such a pitch of perfection as it does with Mazo. The Spanish temperament has, in all ages, shown a facility for assimilating all sorts of knowledge, and the racial instinct showed itself in art as it did in other developments." The author passes in review Carreño, and those pupils, or rather successors, of Velasquez, who carried on the great tradition of Spanish art, down to Claudio Coello, the last artistic "heir of the house" of Velasquez, thus bringing the art of Madrid down to its decline and fall in the last few years of the seventeenth and the first few years of the eighteenth century. The reign of Charles II. was one of decadence and political ruin for Spain; it was also the beginning of the decadence of the great tradition in painting.

The King was desirous of decorating the principal staircase and vault of the church of the Escorial, and "having heard of the great reputation acquired by Luca Giordano, sent for him to accomplish this work." Coello understood at once how this would turn out, and when Don Cristobal Ontañon said to him, "Giordano is coming to teach you how to make a great deal of money," he replied, "Yes, sir, and to absolve us from our sins and our faults and to take away our scruples."

The advent of the Neapolitan artist, in 1692, marks the introduction of a new and mannered style, quite opposed to the national genius. He broke the Spanish tradition, and when he left Spain, "leaving nothing behind him but his works, the Spaniards who attempted to imitate his style were not successful; the realistic and sober Spanish art was not suited to produce works of the type of Giordano." He at once won the favour of the King, and in consequence he was charged with commissions and yet more commissions, which he executed to the great admiration of the ignorant, and with that deplorable facility which earned for him the title of *ja presto*; he reigned, at last, as sovereign master of that school which he had debased and dragged down into a complete decadence.

The translation of Señor de Bernete y Moret's manuscript is excellent; the only *erratum* to be noticed is on page 182, where *Epimetus* is given for Epimetheus, in "Pandora and Epimetheus."

SHORTER REVIEWS

Manual of Occasional Offices for the Use of the Clergy. Compiled by the REVEREND J. L. SAYWELL. (London: Cope and Fenwick.)

ALTHOUGH the compilers of this manual inform us that it has been "called into existence by the inadequacy of the Book of Common Prayer to meet the various occasions and manifold activities of the Church, it is difficult to see the necessity for this work. It has all been done before, and much better and more

amply done, in that admirable *vade mecum*, the Priests' Prayer Book, which contains a great number of offices and prayers for every possible occasion, and, moreover, is drawn up from strictly Liturgical sources. In the manual before us we notice some unnecessary alterations and departure from precedent. There are also many remarkable omissions: no offices being provided for the Visitation of the Sick in special cases, except one for the administration of unction. Nor is the office for hearing Confession included, nor any office for the Communion of the Sick with the Reserved Sacrament. Only one prayer for the departed occurs, at the end of an office with the curious title: "Reading Over." There is an Order for the Burial of Unbaptized, with a wholly unauthorised and indefensible rubric implying that the insane who commit suicide are not entitled to the ordinary service. There are a considerable number of very modern collects, but the spiritual art of writing collects has been long in abeyance, as is well known. But it is possible that those priests (and we fear they are many) who are not acquainted with the wealth of the Church's Liturgical lore may find this book fairly useful, so far as it goes.

The Pools of Silence. By H. DE VERE STACPOOLE. (T. Fisher Unwin, 6s.)

MR. STACPOOLE has succeeded, as is usual with him, in writing a strong and very readable story, but he has weakened it by bringing in a "cause"; few novelists can venture to do this and at the same time retain a high level of interest. He attacks the Congo administration, and makes a good many sweeping statements which can hardly be profitably discussed in a review, but which in fairness we must say he seems to substantiate by referring to various authorities. Apart from this, the story is a study of a mighty hunter, one Berselius, who after spells of civilised life in Paris hears the call of the tropical forest and sets forth after big game, ostensibly, but really to satisfy his lust of killing; his nature is essentially ferocious and bloodthirsty. From the point of view of Dr. Paul Quincy Adams, a man who becomes his travelling medical adviser and assistant, the plot is unfolded, and up to a certain incident the attention of the reader is held irresistibly. Then, with the stampede of a herd of elephants, in which Berselius is knocked down and loses his memory, the whole thing becomes tame and unconvincing; Mr. Stacpoole's good fairy seems to desert him, and the result is disappointment.

The paragraphs of description in the book are often very fine. Even if they are sometimes a trifle strained the effect is at least original. We may instance a few lines from the first page:

The sun was setting over Paris, a blood-red and violent-looking sun, like the face of a bully staring in at the window of a vast chill room. The bank of cloud above the west, corrugated by the wind, seemed not unlike the lowermost slats of a Venetian blind; one might have fancied that a great finger had tilted them up whilst the red, callous, cruel face took a last peep at the frost-bitten city, the frost-bound country—Montmartre and its windows, winking and bloodshot; Bercy and its barges; Notre Dame, where icicles, large as carrots, hung from the lips of the gargoyles, and the Seine clipping the *cité* and flowing to the clean but distant sea.

Everybody may not care for so urgent and unpoetic a metaphor as that exploited in the opening lines, but not many people will miss reading it. "The Pools of Silence" does not rise, we think, to the level of some of Mr. Stacpoole's previous work, but it is certainly a relief from the ordinary course of fiction. And if the author would drop his irritating habit of using a comma when a semi-colon is demanded the pleasure of many to whom these things make a difference would be increased.

Wheel Magic. By J. W. ALLEN. (John Lane, 3s. 6d.)

A FRIEND suggested to Mr. Allen that there was as yet no Izaak Walton of cycling, and that he might be the man to come. But there is still no Izaak Walton of the road; it is a far cry from the inimitable manner of the classic to the self-conscious but pleasant manner of this modern. Mr. Allen is quite conscious of it. "The little book is done; but it is not the thing we dreamed of. It is a quite other thing. Even from the first I knew in my heart that it was not for me, in the good, old, unsophisticated fashion, simply to set down my delight. From the first I knew that, so soon as I took pen in hand, I should become that anxious, posing, really contemptible being, a petty artist. . . . I knew, even at the first, that Izaak Walton is dead and has no fellow." In "Wheel Magic"—which bears the alternative title, "Revolutions of an Impressionist"—the author speaks "with a strange sense of joy" of his bicycle. He blesses the machine that enables him to find and to see. His delight on the road recalls the fervour and the pleased expectancy of Stevenson's walker who "cannot tell whether he puts his knapsack on or takes it off with more delight." His enthusiasm knows no bounds. "The perfected cyclist," he writes, "is a wandering spirit, full of eyes, like the beast in the Revelation. All the burden of humanity falls from him as he mounts. He has no past, neither does his future extend beyond the flying day. His is the zenith of optimism. The flower by the wayside is for him the sweetness of the world made visible. His easy downward glide is the very movement of life. Sorrow and pain are far-off accidental things, as irrelevant as death. All toil and vanity his wheels have left behind. The abodes of poverty are bright with his happiness. A puncture, a patch of stones in the roadway, a dust-compelling motor, these are the worst of life's troubles. The goodness of God is manifest in the sunshine." We hope this is all true—for Mr. Allen's sake! But why will the pilgrims of to-day insist so loudly on their means of locomotion, whether motor or bicycle? Can they not get to their destination, like Childe Harold, without a word of coach or diligence? In Mr. Allen's book we hear more of his machine than of the countryside whose beauties he feels so keenly, and of which, when he can forget his bicycle, he gives some charming vignettes. A weakness of the book is a certain poverty of subject matter. One whole chapter is given to the accidents common to bicyclists, and such faint ghosts of unimportant vicissitudes; while a wet afternoon and trifling with an atlas is the *motif* of another. In two the barrenness of reality is supplemented with long dreams—or, rather, nightmares—at an inn. But, as Dr. Johnson said, "Adventures to the adventurous."

Elizabeth Visits America. By ELINOR GLYN. (Duckworth & Co., 6s.)

MR. PRICE COLLIER, in a recent book, explains why the Englishman is the most generally disliked of men. "It is," he says, "the superiority or superciliousness of the race," and he suggests that the American enthusiastic and indiscriminating hospitality to foreigners, especially to Englishmen and Englishwomen, is simply looked upon as an acknowledgment of this superiority. Perhaps this book, with its note of superiority, will be another ground for dislike. It presents the superficial view of one who has seen America rapidly and as a guest, and treats only of the things which leap to the eye in the everyday life of the nation. It is not, of course, a sober study, like Mr. H. G. Wells's book, or M. Bourget's. Elizabeth's contributions to our knowledge of America are not considerable. "America is too quaint," she writes. She deplores the snobbishness in America, and yet can write pleasantly enough, "I suppose you have to be up where we are for it all to seem nonsense and not to

matter." Her views on the question of divorce in America are equally characteristic. "The tiresome part" of the facilities for divorce is, "that it must quite take away the zest of forbidden fruit that European nations get out of such affairs," while flirtations, to a married woman, have no zest, "because you can get a divorce and marry the man so easily, it makes it always *une affaire de jeune fille*." Mormonism, as a system, is ridiculous, in her opinion, in a country which is generous enough to allow men and women as many mates as they please, so long as they have them one by one and not all at once. "A man to have six wives is an impossible idea—specially as now it is not necessary the way they behave." Surprise is expressed at the virtuous conduct of the American women, and an amazing explanation of this is put into the mouth of an elderly *grande dame* of Southern blood:

"The young men nearly all drink too many cocktails, and that is what makes them so unreserved when they get to their clubs, so the women can't have them for lovers, because they talk about it."

The progress of the narrative is constantly interrupted by protestations of innocence surprising in a person of Elizabeth's often-expressed tendencies, and absurd enough when one remembers her earlier visits.

Perhaps we have considered Mrs. Glyn too seriously in the matter of her criticism of life. It is an impertinent and vivacious book; not Lord Chesterfield's Letters, but the Letters of Elizabeth. But her English cannot be taken too seriously, as we pass from clumsy construction to confused thought, from incredible grammar to haphazard punctuation, surprising in a person who is able to "discuss some phase of the Renaissance" at luncheon, and to resent a mistake in the knowledge of that period. Here are some astonishing sentences:

"The footmen are in full dress with silk stockings and one or two places they had them powdered."

"Nobody appeared English—I mean of origin, even if their name is Smith or Brown, every other nation, with the strong stamp of 'American' dominating whatever country they originally hailed from, but not English."

"I asked him what his views were about us in England. We of the leisured class, and he said he thought most of us were pretty sound."

"The effect of Wild is intense."

Altogether a deplorable book, deplorably illustrated with thumb-nail sketches by an untrained hand. It is more than probable that Elizabeth will not pay a second visit to America.

Round the Lake Country. By the REV. H. D. RAWNSLEY. (Maclehose, Glasgow, 5s.)

DISPUTANTS are often engaged over the small-change of conversation in fruitless efforts to decide which is the most beautiful district of England. In the nature of things it must be a question of temperament and associations, since there is no standard of natural beauty. One man will prefer the flat estuaries of the east coast, with their bird-haunted solitudes, their wonderful sunsets, and their expanses of poppies and shallow meadows; another will assert that he is a man of Kent, and therefore (curious egotism!) that county must come first on the list; Yorkshiremen with reason claim that their fine river-valleys and moors and ranges should give their big county a high place; Devonshire men are notably pugnacious where the honour of the bonnie West is concerned, and dwellers in the lake country yield to none others the palm. So when experts differ we will not place ourselves in an invidious position by attempting to evolve any conclusive theory on the subject. At the same time it must be admitted

that the rarity of lake scenery in these islands makes a very strong point for those who write of Cumberland and the neighbourhood—many people hardly ever saw more in the way of inland sheets of water than a town reservoir until they visited the Wordsworth country.

Canon Rawnsley is not so emphatic on the beauty of his chosen land, perhaps, as on the richness of its historical and ecclesiastical memories; he probably thinks that we have already plenty of exponents of the artistic and descriptive kind, beginning, of course, with the poet whose name is for ever linked with this corner of England. We do not mean to insinuate that in this book the natural charms of the district are not alluded to, but it specialises in happy stories of the olden times and explanations of the various monuments and crosses which the traveller meets with in profusion. In so doing it is to be placed in a far higher category than the mere guide-book; it forms a most useful and interesting companion for anyone of an inquiring turn of mind who contemplates explorations among these delightful mountain-ways. All along the coast are remains of the settlements of the Viking rovers and the ancient races; hut circles of stone, not unlike the weird Dartmoor "rings," are found in many spots—at Hampsfell, Thwaites Fell, up Crosby Ghyll, and at Seascale, to mention but a few. The Roman road of Agricola can still be traced, and the remains of a Roman general's house in a remarkable state of preservation can be seen at Ravenglass. The author has some excellent comments on the evidence of the dialect and the place-names as to old occupation by invaders from over the North Sea:

Anyone who looks at a map of Cumberland and Lancashire—north-of-the-sands, will note the abundance of Scandinavian village and hill names. The terminations of *thwaite*, *rigg*, *fell*, *dale*, *seat*, *side*, *wick*, *garth*, *how*, *holme*, *abound*. Those who journey up Dunner Dale or on the Thurston Water (Coniston) or to Gosforth, will find remains of Thor the Thunderer, while as they go from Ulpha's town by Dalton to Ulpha in the Duddon vale, may have echoes of Norse chieftains, *Ulph* and *Dali*, in their ears. If they enter into the farmhouses they will see the "*rannel boke*" and the creamstick made of the Viking's holy ash-tree or *Igdrasil* as charm against the bewitching of the milk. . . . They will hear the old Norse tongue spoken as the shepherd bids them see "*hoo t*" sheepes raking to-daäy." . . . If they look at the blue eyes and the fine-cut profile and heavy jaws, and large limbs and long arms of the shepherds and farm folk of the dales they speak with, they will feel that just such were the Norse sea-rangers, who probably in two invasions under their leaders, Thorolf and Ingolf, between 874 and 920 A.D., ran their beaked ships across from the Isle of Man to Ravenglass and the Fore Ness, and came with further force to take complete possession of the Lake Country between 1000 and 1060 A.D.

The analogy between the old Norse legends and the central facts of the Christian faith is pointed out well. "Odin is sung of in the Sagas as having offered himself to himself, and as hanging for nine whole nights on a wind-rocked tree sore wounded by a spear." Of the resemblances the Christian teachers of the ninth and tenth centuries were quick to take advantage. "If the Norsemen had their tree of life, so had the Christians in Christ and His cross their tree of life, whose leaves were for the healing of the nations." And with such memories in our minds it becomes a fascinating study to inspect the mysterious carved crosses at Gosforth and other places, each cross, of almost imperishable stone, representing by figure and letter some myth or some story to be impressed on the minds of the strong, simple men gathered round it. "Crosses were set up," says Canon Rawnsley, "at a time when the congregation that assembled here remembered their Norse myths, but had accepted Christ."

Of St. Bees, and the poem of Beowulf, a most interesting chapter is made; another treats of St. Cuthbert's last journey in Cumberland; the Countess Pillar and its story forms the subject of a third digression.

In fact, the author has in quite a noteworthy manner compiled on the history of the district a treatise which is so compact that it calls for admiration on that point alone, leaving out of consideration the literary graces of the narratives, which are by no means scanty. In avoiding the conventional manner Canon Rawnsley has done well, and his book is a welcome addition to the literature of the celebrated scenes which form its theme.

THE TWILIGHT OF THE POETS

It is a common fallacy to suppose that what is clearly expressed must necessarily be lacking in depth; and, on the other hand, that what is unintelligible must as necessarily be profound. Poets have often deliberately played upon this erroneous notion, and by a studied obscurity of utterance have won reputation for depth of thought. Wycherley had this type of poet in his mind when he put into the mouth of Mr. Novel, in the "Plain-Dealer," his advice to the incipient dramatist to write his plays in verse, on the ground that rhyme "often makes mystical nonsense pass with the critics for wit." Never was truer word spoken. Throughout our literature there has arisen from time to time a school of poets whose common doctrine seems to have been that obscurity is the soul of wit. Under Elizabeth the idea found expression in the tortured words and suffocating metaphors of Chapman, and above all in the insane theory of English prosody propounded by Richard Stanyhurst. This worthy maintained that quantity rather than accent ought to be the guiding principle of English as of Latin metre. In accordance with his theory he translated the first four books of the *Æneid*. The result is a literary monstrosity.

For the unsauerye rakhel with collops bludred yfrancked
With chuffe chaffe wynesops like a gourd bourrachoe
replennisht,
His nodil in crossewise wresting droune droups to the
growndward,
In belche golph vomiting with dead sleape snortyng the collops
Raw with wyne soused, we doe pray toe supernal asemblye.
Round with al embaying thee mufte maffe loller; eke hastily
With toole sharp pointned wee boarde and perced his oane
light,
That stood in his lowring front gloomish malleted onely.

To the initiated, the above lines (chosen at random) tell how Ulysses blinded the Cyclops Polyphemus. Nash in his preface to Greene's "*Arcadia*" (1589) mildly parodied this work:

Then did he make heaven's vault to rebound with rounce,
robble, bobble
Of ruffe, raffe roaring, with thwicke, thwack, thurlerie,
bouncing.

It is not too much to say that the original is at least as silly as the parody; yet Southey, in his "*Horæ Otiosiores*," professes to find Stanyhurst "very entertaining, and, to a philologist, a very instructive writer." Thus is the wit justified of his witticism; whilst nonsense masquerading in rhyme has seldom lacked sympathetic critics and an admiring public.

Stanyhurst was still living when, under the first of the Stuarts, the fantastic conceits and the perverted ingenuity of the metaphysical poets, Crashaw, Donne, Quarles, and Herbert became the vogue. The greatest of these was Donne. His best work is, however, marred by remote analogies and absurdly incongruous similes. In one poem he complains that his affection "is grown corpulent," and he is obliged to limit it "to a sigh a day." Shrewd old Ben Jonson had no illusions as to the metaphysical school of poets. He saw that Donne and his fellows were too witty to swim.

In one of his conversations with Drummond he said that he "esteemed Donne the first poet in the world in some things, but that he would perish for not being understood."

This mental obliquity, however, is not indigenous to England. Le Sage has justly ridiculed the folly of such writers in the person of the literary barber in "*Gil Blas*." "You find this sonnet unintelligible?" asks the poetical shaver, in explaining his method to the hero, "so much the better, my dear fellow! Sonnets, odes, and indeed all works which attempt the sublime are not adapted to the simple and the natural; obscurity is their chief merit. It is sufficient if the poet thinks he himself understands what he means."

Shakespeare himself has sometimes fallen under the temptation to write in riddles. In Act IV., Scene 4, of "*All's Well that Ends Well*," for instance, occurs the line:

All's well that ends well: still the fine's the crown.

It does not at first dawn on the reader that Shakespeare has been betrayed into making a feeble jest on the motto, "*Finis coronat opus*." Another instance of a meaningless verse in Shakespeare is the well-known line in Mrs. Quickly's description of Falstaff's death in "*Henry V.*," Act II., Scene 4, which in the original text read:

His nose was as sharp as a pen, and a table of greene fields.

A friend suggested to the commentator Theobald that the verse should be:

His nose was as sharp as a pen, and 'a talked of greene fields;

whereupon Theobald at once improved upon the hint by writing:

His nose was as sharp as a pen, and 'a babbled of greene fields;

an emendation which had been generally adopted.

Such lapses on the part of the great are a constant snare to the lesser men, and the great satirists from Horace downwards have levelled their vitriolic utterances against those who affect the vices of their betters. In this way many a poetaster has been rescued from oblivion, and "damned to everlasting fame." It was thus with the unhappy Shadwell, who in an evil moment had the temerity to attack Dryden. His lesson was drastic:

Shadwell alone, of all my sons, is he
Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
But Shadwell never deviates into sense.

The biting satire of "*Mac Flecknoe*" holds the name of Shadwell up to infamy and contempt, and he is known to posterity as the Prince of Dullards. But it is written, "He who laughs last, laughs longest." After the Revolution Dryden was removed from the Laureateship, and the butt of generous canary went to beguile the palate of Thomas Shadwell, his bitterest foe, who was elected to reign in his stead. But however much nonsense is to be found in Shadwell's work, for sheer inanity it would be difficult to match Dryden's own line,

My wound is great because it is so small.

On the first representation of the play in which this rhetorical gem occurs it is related that Buckingham, at this point, rose from his seat, and, mimicking the voice and gesture of the actor, finished the couplet with

Then 'twould be greater were it none at all!

Coming to the latter half of the 18th century, it is at least probable that Macpherson's "*Ossian*" owed half its popularity to the stimulus derived from its

frequent unintelligibility. In our own day it is scarcely necessary to recall the many occasions on which Robert Browning and Mr. Meredith have fallen under the spell of the obscure; whilst we can often only divine the suggestive beauty which the Symbolists, and the poets of the modern Celtic Renaissance (among whom there is good reason to class M. Maeterlinck), so seldom do more than half reveal to us.

A DOUBTFUL AFFAIR

THE factory hooter proclaimed to the world within its range the fact that six o'clock had arrived. Its deep-throated, stentorian buzz, stifling all other sounds, penetrated into the depths of distant engine-rooms, crept through the rumble of the grinding-mills, and echoed across the water from the heights beyond. Loose papers, held in the hands of the office clerks, responded to the vibration of the air by a faint "tickling," and the invoices on files rattled. Two miles away, in the town, when the wind was right, people set their watches by the swelling note, which at that distance became musical; while close at hand, amid the dust and clatter of the mills, the men of the day-shift heard it as a welcome signal of release.

The entrance of the boiler-room abutted on the narrow quay-side. From the opposite wharf, on the sunniest of days, it showed as a black, cavernous hole in the high, weathered wall, with two or three luminous specks gleaming in its remoter recesses. If the onlooker were sufficiently curious to stroll round the dock-head and enter, his eyes would require a minute or more to accustom themselves to the gloom, and then, in the dusky light of the nude, yellow gas-jets, he would distinguish the shadowy circles of four immense boilers frowning down on him like black, impassive faces, and he would notice that the air was surfeited with a certain ceaseless, sleepy hiss that carried with it a rather alarming sensation of power held in leash. Before he had time to note much more he would probably find that the blue eyes of Tom Burton were looking into his from a smeared but genial face; and Tom, if the stranger showed an enquiring turn of mind, would most likely give him a handful of cotton-waste and take him round.

Tom stood at the door, having closed his dampers to check the draught (for there was an hour's interval at six o'clock, and the chief snubbed you if he came round and found the steam roaring off), to watch a big coal-steamer coming in to the opposite quay. The strong rays of the summer sun painted a bronze-like sheen on her dark, curving side, and as she emerged from the golden haze of the harbour she took upon herself the airs and graces of a liner. At her not unshapely bows a lessening curl of foam made a speck of pure white; all the rest was colour: blue of the harbour, gold of the sky, greys and greens and faint, fine purples of the middle distance, where several indeterminate shapes of vessels took their way along the buoyed channels. Yet with all this colour the eyes were rested by regarding the scene, for not a single tint was intrusive or flamboyant; it resembled a delicate pastel drawing, and seemed as though everything had been softened by a curtain of fine gauze. The boat slowed until her bows merely marked the apex of an advancing triangle of ripples, and the sinuous reflections of her masts, cordage, and thick, stained funnel became almost as steady as herself. Nearer and nearer she crept, swerving to a spin of her wheel till parallel with her berth, the blackest thing in the picture, except that uncommonly black hole where Tom leaned against a rusty waste-pipe and gazed at her. Already her men had removed the great tarpaulins from her hatches and uncovered the

cranes; on the granite coping stood others, neither sailors nor landsmen, blue-jerseyed, waiting for the flung ropes. These flew across, uncoiling in mid-air, and with shouts and hoarse orders were hauled in until the heavy, many-ply cable came dripping ashore. The weighty bights were carried along and made fast; a few feet farther glided the great tramp-steamer, then, with a surly backward swish of her screw, she came to rest.

A little waif, the kind of boy that haunts all water-side localities of large towns, had also watched the arrival from his post on the top of a pile of timber, and now, clambering down, came shambling aimlessly along the quay. His rough, light hair—he wore no cap—was fluttered about his eyes by the evening breeze; every now and then he brushed it back with a hasty movement of a dirty little hand. Clothes, in the sense which a well-to-do person assigns to that word, he had none; it would have puzzled a tailor to dissect or to name the conglomeration of shoddy material hanging round the poor little chap. His shoes gaped, and held together with string; his coat—since one must give it some designation—would most certainly never pass on to anyone else after he had discarded it, it almost settled the question by dropping to pieces; his trousers were a masterpiece of patch-work. Tom Burton transferred his attention to the unkempt, grimy little mortal as it moved here and there in front of him, picking up stray bits of stick and rubbish, alert for other people's leavings. The boy was happy, it seemed, for he whistled as he wandered; brave blue eyes he owned, too; they shone finely when he faced the sunlight, although his cheeks were pinched.

From the deck of the tramp a stoker—come up for a breather before he started on donkey-engine duty, unloading—also watched the boy, contemplatively. Presently a banana shot over the intervening strip of water and skidded at the youngster's feet. He dodged after it and made short work of devouring it, peering across and laughing, the merry little imp, when he caught sight of the form that leaned carelessly over the rail of the steamer.

"Hungry, sonny?" called the stoker, his face wrinkling into a cheerful, encouraging grin.

"Yas," answered the boy, his eyes glistening.

"Catch, then!"

Over flew another ripe banana. The boy rushed forward to catch it, slipped and fell . . . there was a splash, and a shrill cry. There were two bigger splashes immediately after, and numberless whirls of grime and dirty bubbles, and dark, liquid lanes, marking where the two men had plunged in and the black mud of the bottom been disturbed.

Tom emerged first, then the stoker, and, treading water, they both looked round for the scrap of humanity at whose call, without a moment's conscious thought, they had taken the leap. Something was floating out helplessly past the end of the stone pier, turning slowly in circles with eddies of the receding tide. Both men swam for that pale, pitiful little gleam of yellow hair, and Tom, reaching the boy first, pushed him towards the slipperv, green-coated steps that led down to the water near the end of the jetty; the other man came up in time to help, and fortunately, for Tom, being portly, was a bit blown. Together they brought the boy to the boiler-house, and there were many encouraging shouts from those on board the steamer who had heard the splashes and crowded to the side.

Bedraggled and panting they were, but their burden looked half dead and very white. He had not been in the water more than a minute, perhaps, but his reserve of life-force was too evidently very scanty. His wet hair shone like clear gold in the deepening

rays of the sun, and the water that trickled from his shapeless garments traced bright lines and formed little pools among the coal-dust that lay thickly over the cobbles of the quay. The men looked anxious as they laid him on a bench. Tom kicked open the furnace-doors of one of the boilers, and dragged the bench in front of it, wrapping a sack tenderly round the quiet form. The rich, strong glow of the huge fires beat straight on the boy, making his soaked odds-and-ends steam steadily, betraying, as the men went through the necessary movements to restore him, the pitiful thinness of his arms, the leanness of his poor body.

His face, which had shown a false ruddiness in that warm illumination, by and by was tinged with a shade of real colour from within, and he opened his eyes. Just then there was a sound of running feet, and a woman, hard-faced, untidy, stood silhouetted in the doorway against the outside radiance.

"O, my Gawd!" she cried, seeing them bending over the listless form. "O, my Gawd! is he dead?" And she reeled to a heap of coal in the corner, sat there, plaining, repeating her exclamation, wringing her miserable hands. The two men took but little notice of her, striving to fan the tiny, flickering life-flame into a steadier burning. Tom's tea-can had been placed in a corner of the furnace close to the door; in two minutes its contents were nearly boiling; the hot liquid revived the boy, and he came round quickly.

Tom picked up the queer little shape in his strong, hairy arms, and turned to the woman.

"Now then, missis, you'd better take him home quick, an' keep him warm," he said, gruffly, for he did not like the look of her. "Wait a minute." He gave his burden to the other man, and, picking up a dry sack, slashed with his pocket-knife a large hole through its bottom, holding it and turning it for a minute in front of the roaring fires. Then, slipping it deftly over the head of the boy, who looked on wonderingly, he pressed the warm, coarse folds comfortably round the dank, drowsy figure.

"Now, mum, can you carry him?"

Apparently she could not, for even as she stood waiting she swayed ominously, her eyes staring, her lips muttering unintelligible words. So the boy was set upon his feet, a quaint, sad little spectacle, to take the woman's hand. The two men stood at the doorway watching, comprehending dimly a tragedy of life that might be worse than the averted tragedy of death. She led him off. Her words came back to them thickly and indistinctly as she jerked him along by the wrist.

"Ah, you little devil, you—" The boy began to cry quietly.

Tom and the stoker of the tramp exchanged understanding glances, and stood for a while talking, frowning, following with their eyes the two who shuffled along in the sunshine. The snarling syllables gradually became unrecognisable as words.

A bell jangled in the boiler-house behind. Tom disappeared in the gloom to slice his fires, to open his dampers—for it was seven o'clock—and to change his steaming overalls; while his companion, glancing thoughtfully at the red sails of a trawler that was running out on the freshening wind, lit a short, shabby pipe. Presently he turned, facing inwards, hands in pockets.

"Mate!"

"Hello!" answered Tom, pausing and looking up in the act of clearing out the clinkers, bathed in the fierce heat.

"Better 've let the kid drown, p'raps."

"Shouldn't wonder," shouted Tom, slicing away vigorously. The other, with a brief nod, sauntered round the edge of the silent dock-head back to his ship.

MEETINGS OF SOCIETIES

ROYAL METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY.

THE last meeting of this Society for the present session was held on Wednesday afternoon, the 16th instant, at 70 Victoria Street, Westminster, Mr. H. Mellish, President, in the chair.

A paper by Mr. R. C. Mossman, F.R.S.E., on the "Interdiurnal Variability of Temperature in Antarctic and Sub-Antarctic Regions" was read by the Secretary. The author discussed the day to day difference in the mean temperature of successive days at a few places in the Antarctic regions for which the necessary detailed daily observations are available. The greatest mean annual temperature variability—viz., 5.9° —was recorded during the "drift" of the *Belgica* in the ice-pack, this high value being closely followed by a mean of 5.3° at the South Orkneys. In the Victoria Land region, Ross Island and Cape Adare have a somewhat lower temperature variability of 4.5° , the values of the southern station being higher in summer and autumn and lower in winter and spring than at the northern station. South Georgia occupies an intermediate position between a continental and oceanic climate in its curve of variability, the mean monthly values varying according to the proximity of the pack ice. At this station the seasonal values show a small variation, and this is also the case at Ushuaia in Tierra del Fuego. The variability at the Falkland Islands and New Year's Island is very small, pointing to the conserving influence exerted by the insular conditions which prevail at these places. The maximum variability occurs in winter, and the minimum in summer, at the three Antarctic stations as well as at South Georgia and the South Orkneys. The smallest variability at any season for any station occurs at the South Orkneys in summer, being only 1.4° . It is at this season that cloud amount and fog frequency are at a maximum, while at the same time rapidly moving cyclonic disturbances are of infrequent occurrence.

Mr. Ernest Gold described some experiments which he and Dr. W. Schmidt had made with a view of ascertaining if appreciable errors could enter into the temperature recorded in balloon ascents owing to errors in the alcohol-carbonic acid method of testing the apparatus.

Mr. L. C. W. Bonacina read a brief paper advocating the use of freely exposed thermometers in addition to sheltered ones.

LINNEAN SOCIETY OF LONDON.

GENERAL MEETING, 3RD JUNE, 1909.

DR. D. H. SCOTT, F.R.S., President, in the chair.

The minutes of the Anniversary Meeting of the 24th May, 1909, were read and confirmed.

Mr. Richard Siddoway Bagnall was proposed as a Fellow.

The Lady Isabel Mary Peyronnet Browne, Capt. Stanley Smyth Flower, Mr. Valavanur Subramania Iyer, M.A. Madras Univ., Miss Julia Lindley, and Mr. William Robert Price, B.A. Cantab., were elected Fellows.

The President announced that he had appointed the following as Vice-Presidents for the ensuing year:—Sir Frank Crisp, Mr. Horace W. Monckton, Prof. E. B. Poulton, and Lieut.-Col. Prain.

The first exhibition was by Prof. Dendy, F.R.S., Sec.L.S., of photomicrographs showing nuclear division in *Galtonia candicans*, Decne., and nuclear division and fertilisation in *Ascaris megaloccephala*.

The President added some observations on the interest of these slides.

Mr. A. D. Cotton, F.L.S., showed dried and recent specimens in formalin, of *Colpomenia sinuosa*, Derbès & Sol., from Weymouth, explaining how this Mediterranean species had advanced during the last few years up the French coast, into the English Channel; it was

believed to act injuriously to young oysters, by breaking them adrift on its rising by buoyancy when distended with air.

An animated discussion followed, in which the following joined:—Mr. E. M. Holmes, Dr. J. C. Willis, Prof. Dendy, and Mr. J. C. Shenstone, Mr. Cotton replying.

The first paper was by Mr. A. R. Horwood—"On *Calamites* (*Calamitina*) *Schutzei*, Stur, and on the correspondence between the length of internodes and the position and function of the short internode in the genus *Calamites* and in the recent *Equisetaceæ*"—which was communicated by Mr. E. E. Lowe, F.L.S.

The author stated that a specimen of *Calamites Schutzei*, Stur, shortly to be figured, exhibits graphically the fistular character of the stem in *Calamites*, a specimen 3 feet long having been split into two portions longitudinally and so preserved.

In the same specimen (from the Main Coal, Stanton-under-Bardon, Leics.) and in another from Brighouse, Yorks., provisionally referred to this species, the regularly uniform length and position of a short internode at the commencement of each period of uniformly longer internodes are specially marked. In the first case no other figure illustrates the hollow pith in *Calamites* so well, and in the second case the uniform length of the internodes is interesting.

As a result of a study of this specimen and of a comparison made between it and specimens of the recent species of *Equisetum*, it is found that there is a strong resemblance between the two groups, *Calamariæ* and *Equisetaceæ*, in the position of the short internode, and a marked similarity in the uniform rate of increase or decrease in the length of the internodes in both groups also, most apparent in *Calamitina*, but probably in a modified form in *Eucalamites* and *Stylocalamites*, and in subterranean stems of *S. Suckowii* there is a strict homology. The function in both extinct and recent groups was probably the same. It does not appear that similar observations have so far been made.

The following general conclusions have so far been arrived at from the investigation:—

(1) *Position*.—The short internode precedes a new period—i.e., is situated (a) at the base of the aerial stem, (b) between branchless and branch-bearing internodes, (c) before the strobilus or cone, or (d) in *Calamariæ* before a combination of (a) and (b).

(2) *Function*.—Its function appears to be to add strength to the stem by the occurrence of two girder-like nodes (with diaphragms) within a short distance of each other, thus serving the purpose of a double girder.

Equisetum is regarded as a degenerate form derived from the *Calamariæ* through *Equisetites*.

The second paper was by Mr. H. O. S. Gibson, B.A., on the Cephalochorda—"Amphioxides"—of the Sealark Expedition, and was communicated by Mr. J. Stanley Gardiner, F.R.S., F.L.S.

Prof. Dendy and Mr. H. W. Monckton, V.P., put some questions, to which the author replied.

The last paper, by Prof. J. Arthur Thomson, on the Alcyonaria of the Sealark Expedition, was also communicated by Mr. J. Stanley Gardiner, and in the absence of the author was read in the title.

CORRESPONDENCE

A NEGLECTED COMMA.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—A few days ago, whilst enjoying the reading of an article in a critical half-crown quarterly review, I came across the following sentence, which I had to read twice before I could grasp the full meaning of its first paragraph:

"To possess a literature purely its own a country must be independent politically, and it must have a language peculiar to it."

The pause I had to make somewhat disappointed me as a linguist fond of clear prose, and also because the chief beauty of the style of the author in question is precisely what I admire most in literary productions—namely, "clearness." I then tried to find out the reason for what I shall call the exceptional want of clearness in that author's style. It was, to my mind, owing to the absence of a comma between *own* and *a country*.

This incident reminded me of a sentence which I read, years ago, in one of Susan Warner's works:

"She would shrink from a stranger's eye, and yet when spoken to her answers were as ready and acute as they were marked for simplicity and gentleness."

When I had read it the first time, it had no meaning at all. "When spoken to her answers," etc.; I was not happier at the second reading: "When spoken to her," etc.; I attempted the reading of the sentence a third time, and by putting the "neglected comma" after "when spoken to," I could at last understand its full meaning.

From that moment, I have many a time wondered why the majority of English writers make it a point to discard the comma in similar cases. Would it be ungrammatical if they were to insert a comma after an adverb or an adverbial clause? Barnett is of opinion that it is a matter of taste. Nestfield is of the same opinion. Morell is entirely in favour of its use in "They that are drunken are drunken in the night," the adjunct "in the night" is not separated by a comma; but in the sentence, "In the night, the enemy stealthily approached," the adjunct is *better* marked off by a comma, as being an emphatic phrase (extract from Morell's Grammar).

The best French authors, from the seventeenth century to the present time, and also the best French modern journalists, etc., concur with Morell in this opinion:

Extraits d'auteurs du 17e au 20e siècle.

17e siècle.

Pendant que nous mangions, il a fait mettre la galère en mer, etc.

Molière (Les fourberies de Scapin).

17e—18e siècle.

Là, je trouve une croix de funeste présage, etc.

Boileau (Les Embarras de Paris).

18e siècle.

Quand le Khan de Tartarie a diné, un héraut crie que tous les princes de la terre peuvent aller dîner, etc.

Montesquieu (Lettres persanes).

Après l'exécution de la cantate, un chambellan lui fit une harangue de trois quarts d'heure, etc.

Voltaire (Zadig devenu ministre).

18e—19e siècle.

Une heure après le coucher du soleil, la lune se montra au-dessus des arbres à l'horizon opposé, etc.

Chateaubriand (Une nuit dans le Nouveau Monde).

19e siècle.

Dès onze ans, Mlle. Necker composait des portraits, etc.

Sainte-Beuve (Mé. de Staël).

Lorsqu'on lui signifi cet arrêt, il répondit simplement: "Je vous trouve plaisants," etc.

Guy de Maupassant (Histoire d'un condamné à mort au royaume de Monaco).

20e siècle.

Hier soir, un violent incendie a éclaté à B.

(Le Petit Parisien.)

I can even add that this pause, after the adjunct, gives some grace to a speech. The English orators, whom I have hitherto heard in London, generally stopped for a second or two after the adverbial phrase; and this, to my French turn of mind, seemed to give more charm to their diction. Now, if they think that a pause is necessary after the adjunct, in their speeches, why do they not indicate that pause, in writing, by means of a comma?

I make bold to say that, in course of time, the neglected comma *shall* claim its right. I beg to be allowed to make use, here, of the "prophetic" future. My reason for doing so is this, because in the best written books and in the newspapers of high repute, now and then the neglected comma creeps into the place which diction has already assigned to it. Amongst my notes, I have over a score of examples that can bear out this statement. However, in order not to trespass too much on my readers' time and attention, I beg to quote only two cases in point.

(Extract from Leslie Stephens's "Memoir of J. D. Campbell," in one of the pages of the preface of the book):—

"After reaching Mauritius" (*with* the comma), "Campbell made a trip to Bombay in 1866. On his return" (*without* the comma) "he found the island suffering from an outbreak of malarial fever," etc.

(Extracts from the *Weekly Times and Echo*, November 6, 1904, first page):—

(a) "On September 9th" (*without the comma*) "the Japanese mines reached to within fifty metres of Kuropatkin fort," etc.

(b) "On the 28th" (*without the comma*) "the Japanese bombarded the Russian fleet," etc.

(c) "On the 18th" (*with the comma*), "Russian prisoners said that the fate of Port Arthur was near at hand," etc.

A FRENCH LINGUIST.

GEORGE MEREDITH'S "GENIUS."

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—That the author of the "Ordeal of Richard Feverel" was, in degree, "a man of genius" goes without saying. Yet that he was an actual genius in a broad sense is not to be so readily granted. For seldom was there an author of fiction of any note who wrote in a more confused and enigmatic style and fashion than did George Meredith. Take, for example, "The Egoist," than which I do not scruple to affirm never was there perpetrated in the name of "literature" a more chaotic production outside the portals of a madhouse. Nevertheless, the recently deceased and lamented novelist was a gifted and accomplished writer, even though a vastly over-estimated one. But such genius as he had was best manifested in his poetical productions, and presumably in his "Pastorals"; for these were, indeed, beautiful, and never, perhaps, did so misunderstanding and "misunderstood" an author indulge in loftier and sweeter poesy than did George Meredith when under the spell of Nature. But that is not to say that he displayed even then transcendent genius; since he lacked the versatility and comprehensiveness of the heaven-born and universal genius, his lays were sweet, his metre harmonious, his allegory delightful, and his metaphors and symbolical blendings most admirable; but he held not the "key" to the human heart, and could never do better than tickle and captivate the intellectual fancy, for his sympathies were contracted and his temperament was uncongenial.

Consequently his Pegasus was a halting jade, and, save only when in green pastures and flowery meadows, could never be induced to canter freely and gladly. For Mr. Meredith's was a brooding and foreboding nature and mentality; his ego was too pronounced, and yet narrow, to permit of wide-reaching or of broad human sympathy. He could never shake off completely his obsessing ego, or, like Dickens, Thackeray, and other great Victorian masters of fiction, lose himself entirely in the characters of his creation and depiction. And therein, I think, consists the gist of my contention, to the effect that he was in no true sense a man of genius of the highest order. For if (as who shall gainsay?) genius is exceptional capacity to shed light and to fathom the remotest depths of human nature (as distinguishable in literary genius) then George Meredith was *not* a genius in the fullest sense; since in nothing he ever wrote in prose, with the exception perhaps of the "Ordeal of Richard Feverel," did he display any evidence of such capacity. Indeed, so dark and obscure was he in his novels generally that none but professed "mind readers" or devotees to the occult could pretend to "interpret" his actual meaning, or to proclaim his precise "gospel." In other words, were we to accredit him with any deep and earnest desire and purpose to serve mankind and to impart light of any kind on the problems of the human soul and of life we should look in vain for any evidences of the same in his prose works; for not even in the "Ordeal of Richard Feverel" do we observe anything better than admirable diction, biting sarcasm, graceful portrayals, and mournful pessimism, even though he did evince unwonted capacity in a single instance of a distinctively creative nature, as in his depiction of the scene in which his "hero" appeared in a veritable human and pathetic attitude! Moreover, Mr. Meredith was not a bit more fortunate in his public character, or as an authority on social and public questions, than as an author of fiction. For while as an author he had evidently no didactic purpose, so as a private individual and a social unit he would not appear to have been actuated by any definite and exalted motives; and so far from ever having proffered his services and efforts to the cause of humanity, or to the correction of abuses and errors, he rather added to than ameliorated the scene of human confusion, as, for instance, in his astounding comments upon the marriage question! Yet, in spite of everything, Mr. Meredith was an excellent poet; and such genius as he had found its happiest vent in his "Pastorals," the most graceful, melodious, and delightful bursts of genuine poesy, eclipsed

only by Tennyson and Wordsworth in the Victorian epoch.

But whereas Wordsworth and Tennyson devoted their genius to *humanity*, and their mission and "gospel" were obvious to all men, it would not appear that Meredith had any mission or gospel at all! Yet he ever wrote, as a prose author at all events, as though he *thought* he had some kind of a "message" to deliver!

Unfortunately, however, he was plainly more concerned about the *manner* of delivery of his "message" than about its actual delivery. At all events, he never *did* deliver anything of the kind! In song alone did he excel, and then only when under the spell of Nature, or in his "Pastorals." So beautiful, however, were these that the memory of their author should be respected by all lovers of English verse.

EDWIN RIDLEY.

ENGLISH HISTORY THROUGH AMERICAN GLASSES.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—We have had in recent years English history from the States that has made our accepted British historians sit up. Not long ago Mrs. Gallup informed us—*per* her cypher—that Francis Bacon and the Earl of Essex were the sons of Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Leicester!

The latest Yankee exponent of English history is Mr. Price Collier, who has published a book in London entitled "England and the English from an American Point of View."

In his chapter "Who are the English?" we are informed by Mr. Collier, "No man cares a fig what a man's ancestry was in this matter-of-fact land [*i.e.*, Britain] if he succeeds, if he becomes rich and powerful." Then he gives two concrete examples of what he means:

(1) "The mother of the great Queen Elizabeth was the daughter of a plain English gentleman."

The mother of Queen Elizabeth was nothing of the kind. Queen Elizabeth's mother was Anne Boleyn, and so far was Anne's mother, also Elizabeth, from being "the daughter of a plain English gentleman," she was the daughter of Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, who, for his services in defeating the Scots at Flodden, was afterwards made Duke of Norfolk. She married Sir Thomas Boleyn, afterwards Earl of Wiltshire, and their daughter was Anne Boleyn, the mother of Queen Elizabeth.

(2) The other example of English history is the following:—"A pot-girl of Westminster married the master of a pot-house. After his death she consulted a lawyer named Hyde. Mr. Hyde married her. Mr. Hyde afterward became Lord Chancellor with the title of Lord Clarendon, and his wife, the former pot-girl, bore him a daughter. This daughter married the Duke of York, and became the mother of Mary and Anne Stewart, both afterward Queens of England." Then Mr. Collier makes the sapient comment: "It is evident that if Queens of England may have a barmaid for grandmother lesser mortals need not fret on the subject of ancestry."

Unfortunately for this American importer of English history the grandmother of the two Queens was never a "barmaid," or "pot-girl," as he calls her, never married "the master of a pot-house," and was not a widow when she married Edward Hyde. She, Frances, was the only daughter, and sole heiress (after her brother's death), of Sir Thomas Aylesbury, Bart., who had been Secretary to George, Duke of Buckingham, and was afterwards Master of Bequests and Master of the Mint. She was carefully brought up by her father at his seat, Cranbourne Lodge, Windsor Park; and it is safe to say that she never saw the interior of a "pot-house." At least there is no trace of such introduction to low life in Clarendon's "Autobiography," Lister's authoritative "Life," Campbell's "Lives of the Chancellors," or "The Dictionary of National Biography." There is a letter extant to Hyde's father from Sir Thomas congratulating him on the marriage—young Hyde was only a struggling barrister at the time—and stating that he gave the youth his daughter, describing her as "a childe that none could have had from me but a good man." The couple spent a long and happy life together, Lady Hyde on her death being buried in Westminster Abbey, and her husband dying in exile at Rouen.

It will be interesting to learn Mr. Collier's authority for the statement that Frances Aylesbury was ever a "pot-girl."

Mr. Collier shows his further knowledge of English history when, on the next page, he speaks of "down to the commencement of the reign of Charles the Second, 1649"; and again when he includes among the "Peers who have taken their places among the peers by force of long purses gained in trade" the name of Lord Lister.

Mr. Collier's powers of observation are on a par with his knowledge of British history when he writes, among his "First Impressions" of England, the following *dictum*:—"The complexions of the English have often been exploited for our benefit. The damp climate and the exercise out-of-doors produce the red, they say. But on examination it proves to be not the red of the rose, but the red of raw beef, and often streaky and fibrous at that. The features are large and the faces high-coloured, but it is not a delicate pink, it is a coarse red. . . . Here the features of the women, even the features of the beautiful women, are moulded; while the features of our beautiful women are chiselled."

This is possibly the reason they prove so attractive to the British nobility! Mr. Collier, apparently, was never at an Ascot meeting, however.

GEORGE STRONACH.

FLAUBERT AND ST. GERTRUDE.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—One should be apologetic, I suppose, in this age of "common-sense" in speaking of such things as tutelary guardians and the like. Still, even in these most modern of days one's fancy will roam, one's heart will rally with things mediæval, sometimes, indeed, with quite a feeling of kinship! For instance, one might think of this or that saint of old, might come across in the record of their lives this or that which suddenly stirs one with quite a sense of fellowship. And if one forgot one's modernity one might even find oneself turn to them as one would in life, craving for a kindly hand, sure of an instinctive sympathy. And if one fancied this for oneself one might fancy it for others. Hence the thought that brought to mind the two names—Flaubert and St. Gertrude.

Two books are open before me as I write—"The Life and Revelations of St. Gertrude" and a book of essays, by Henry James. The latter is open at the essay of Gustave Flaubert. I read: "His life was that of a pearl-diver, breathless in the thick element while he groped for the priceless word. . . ." Thus Flaubert, with his life-long, soul-absorbing search for the one word, the inevitable word, the Eros to his unwedded, expectant idea.

And I turn over the pages of the "Revelations" and surely the same vivid sense of some intimate, indissoluble correlation of word and ideal! Not, indeed, as in Flaubert, revealing itself as a *search*, as the endeavour to establish such correspondences. In St. Gertrude this vivid sense of union of word and thought reveals itself as some sudden rapturous apprehension of the thought when the word is presented—as though indeed the word came to her with same fulness of sacramental grace. The word is uttered, and the soul of St. Gertrude is uplifted—the vision comes. ("For on the second Sunday, as they sang Mass, before the procession, the response which commences *Vidi Dominum Facie ad Faciem*, a marvellous and inestimable coruscation illuminated my soul with the light of Divine revelation, and it appeared to me that my face was pressed to another face. . . .") How refreshing to the soul of Flaubert might have been the thought of such instinctive veneration for the "priceless word, during the wearisome, disheartening toil of his forty years at the battered table at Croisset." And had he thought of tutelary guardian, whither more fittingly could have been turned "bent head and beseeching hands!" I turn over page after page of these "Revelations of St. Gertrude," and page after page shows the same almost unique exquisite appreciation of the word, this instant coming of the "vision" at the sound of the "priceless word." And the toil of Flaubert seems justified. I say of Flaubert, but I mean of all others who enrich us that way. St. Gertrude's is a name that might be spoken softly by lovers of fit words—a tutelary guardian, perhaps, were not such things out of date.

T. W. COLE.

BURNS'S POEMS FOR GERMAN STUDENTS.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—When a Burns editor can ask a casual commentator on his work what he means by the poet's "pride of place," he practically makes further discussion hopeless. A few final words, however, seem to be imperative. It will be noticed, to begin with, that this is not the first time a complaint has been made regarding the treatment accorded the Scottish bard by the conjoint editors. "Mr. Henley," says Mr. Henderson, "was more than surprised at the accusation that he was endeavouring to depreciate Burns." Apparently his own feel-

ing now may be similarly described; he, too, throughout his communication shows that he is considerably "more than surprised." In his preliminary observations he makes one unwarrantable inference, for it was not suggested in the contribution he discusses that either Mr. Henley or himself cherished what he is pleased to call "a spite of Burns." It is open to his readers to say that he and his collaborator thought, and that he still thinks, the poet over-rated, and that they, together, and he at his own hand, decided to see whether or not it were possible to give him his true position in the poetical ranks. If such was the attitude, taken in unison and separately, it was perfectly legitimate, but Mr. Henderson need not expect that either the combined performance or his own individual experiment should command universal assent. He either misapprehends or he quaintly misinterprets the remarks offered here on the illustrations he advances towards proving Burns's peasant origin. What was said was that members of the aristocracy might have seen and heard (not necessarily put into poetical form) what he reports of the poet, and that therefore the evidence of peasantry is not manifested in the examples chosen. One illustration may suffice: Mr. Henderson says that Burns's line, "The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree," proclaims "his peasant mastery of Nature's idiosyncrasies." Such being his contention, it would be interesting to know how he would place the nobleman who wrote "Don Juan" for his touch about the moonlight "hallowing tree and tower." Manifestly in his application of philosophical analysis Mr. Henderson leaves something to be desired.

"The glossary," says Mr. Henderson, "is succinct"; and he ought to see that it was this very quality of succinctness that prompted the comments on his stimulating entry "be, alone." Here he endeavours to explain a sound example of English phraseology in a manner that very conceivably leads to the large and bewildering issues already indicated. It is also because he is too succinct that he fails to be clear in defining "bracken," "braik," "cheep," "hallan," and other terms that might be specified. With regard to "cheep" in particular, he ought surely to have said that "chirp" as well as "peep" is an equivalent, if only to guard against imminent ambiguity. He declares himself satisfied with his interpretation of "sumple," thus inferentially declining the information proffered as to the word and the character it connotes. On this point Allan Ramsay might be profitably consulted.

SCRUTATOR.

NOTES ON SHAKESPEARE.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—Among sundry compositor's changes in my letter of last week is the substitution of "us" for "as" in the last line, which effectually obscures my meaning.

The word "subscribe," to which I was referring, has many related significations in Shakespeare's works. They may, I think, be classed as follows:—

- (1) To authenticate by signature, "Write to him (I will subscribe) tender adieus" (*Ant. and Cleop.*, IV. 5).
- (2) To enter names for any purpose in a document, "Blank charters, Whereto, when they shall know what men are rich, They shall subscribe them for large sums of gold" (*K. Rich. II.*, I. 4).
- (3) To explicate or set forth, "When I had subscribed To mine own fortune" (*All's Well*, V. 3).
- (4) To be surety or to answer for anyone, "To the possibility of thy soldiership, [I] will subscribe for thee" (*All's Well*, III. 6).—"I will subscribe for thee; thou art both knave and fool" (*Ib.*, IV. 5).
- (5) To act as a substitute or champion, "My uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid" (*Much Ado*, I. 1).
- (6) To give assent to, "To your pleasure humbly I subscribe" (*Tam. Shrew*, I. 1).—"Advise thee, Aaron, what is to be done, And we will all subscribe to thy advice" (*Tit. Andr.*, IV. 2).—"Will you subscribe his thought, and say he is?" (*Troil. and Cress.*, II. 3).
- (7) To be influenced by or be indulgent towards, "For Hector, in his blaze of wrath, subscribes To tender objects" (*Troil. and Cress.*, IV. 5).
- (8) To acknowledge or suffer defeat or yield precedence, "If I have fewest [roses], I subscribe in silence" (*1 K. Hen. VI.*, II. 4).—"Death to me subscribes, Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme" (*Sonnet CVII.*).
- (9) To admit an error or retract an opinion, "Which fear if better reasons can supplant, I will subscribe, and say I wronged the duke" (*2 Hen. VI.*, III. 1).

FRANCIS H. BUTLER.

THE ETYMOLOGY OF "QUOIT."

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—The best account of this word is to be found in the great Oxford dictionary, the editor of the "Q" part being Mr. W. A. Craigie. From this article we may see that the word "coytes" is mentioned in a list of games in an Act passed in the reign of Richard II., and that "coyte" occurs in the *Promptorium* (A.D. 1440) in the sense of a fiat disc of stone or metal thrown as an exercise of strength or skill. Mr. Craigie, cautious man, contents himself with saying that the word is of obscure etymology. In the current *ACADEMY* a correspondent boldly equates this fourteenth century "coyte" with a Scandinavian word "kvitt," used for a coin of the value of the third part of a Danish skilling. Let us examine this word "kvitt" a little more closely. Originally it meant a "white" or silver coin. From Aasen's Norwegian dialect dictionary we learn that "kvitt" is equivalent to the Danish "hvid," which in Larsen's dictionary is explained "doit, $\frac{1}{3}$ of a Dan. Skilling." Both the Norwegian and the Danish forms are derived from the old Norse *hvitr* (white), cp. Norw. dial. *kvit*, Dan. *hvid*, O.E. *hwit*, Eng. *white*. Now, your correspondent actually affirms that a Scandinavian word, which in the fourteenth century was pronounced like O.E. *hwit* (in *Prompt. whyte*), is identical with a *Prompt.* form written *coyte*. I think it must be admitted that even the French derivation mentioned by Mr. Craigie is a more probable one than the Scandinavian one suggested in this week's *ACADEMY*.

A. L. MAYHEW.

June 12, 1909.

OLD FRIENDS OF MR. LE QUEUX.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—I am much interested in the correspondence in your columns regarding my friends, and I am glad to see that they are also of interest to the public.

In reply to the query of your correspondent "O. K."—who has apparently never handled pearls of great price—the pearls in question were heirlooms of the Royal house of Saxony; and if your correspondent is so interested in them, I shall be delighted to furnish him with the name of the bank and that of my "old friend" its manager, who will bear out my statement that I not only introduced to him a certain Royal lady, but I later on handed him the order to deliver over to me the pearls in question to convey to the Continent!

WILLIAM LE QUEUX.

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